

THE SUN, SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 1912.—Copyright, 1912, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

RUSSIA DEFIANT ON THE PASSPORT QUESTION

Won't Change Penal Laws Against the Jews, but Can't Afford Tariff War With the United States

THE SUN has sent to Russia one of the most widely known correspondents in Europe to study the situation arising out of the passport question, which is becoming acute. He is an authority on Russian affairs. This, his first article, deals in illuminating style with the present relations between the United States and the empire of the Czar.

St. Petersburg, March 19.—Between Holy Russia and the United States relations are becoming what the French term fresh. They had lacked the warmth of cordiality ever since the Czar's Ministers became friendly with the Japanese, but today they are superlatively cold. Not that that transformation of hate into love was the unique or main source of the coolness. Many causes, that among others, contributed to bring it about, and prominent among them was Russia's treatment of American citizens of the Jewish faith.

During the negotiations at Portsmouth that very question was mooted by a deputation of influential American Jews, Jacob H. Schiff among them, who were received at the Wentworth Hotel by Count Witte. They told him that they were prepared to favor Russia if Russia dealt fairly by them, but that if they were kept out of the Czar's dominions like plague-stricken beings they could and would pay Russia out in the long run. And they requested the great statesman, whose own wife is a daughter of Zion, to use his influence to better the status of his Jewish fellow citizens and of their foreign brethren visiting the Slav empire. This friendly admonition was seconded by the then commercial attaché at the Russian Embassy, M. Vilenkin, who informed his Government that no Jewish bankers, American or English, would in future take part in the floating of any Russian loan until and unless Russia's legislation against the Jews was revised.

Count Witte took cognizance of the warning and stated that he would accomplish what was possible in the direction of reform, legislative and administrative. Subsequent events have shown the value of that promise. The Count attained to the highest post in the empire soon after that, but presumably he was powerless, if not unwilling, to accomplish anything. To my knowledge numerous endeavors have been made since 1906 by influential personages in various countries to coax or compel the Czar's Ministers to modify the anti-Jewish penal laws or at least those statutes which tell against foreign Jews visiting Russia. Among others I may say that Signor Luzzatti, the ex-Prime Minister of Italy, beset himself more than once in the matter and got friends of his to work in the same sense. But the fruits of their exertions were promises, and these when tested proved to be dead sea fruit. To-day the Jewish problem in Russia stands where it then stood.

And now at last the matter has entered upon a phase of sharp actuality, thanks to the action of the representatives of the United States. But it is not only in America that acts have followed upon words. The Jews of the whole world are declaring war against Russia.

Like the Roman Catholic Church, the Jewish community is a racial religious fraternity which without possessing political rights can discharge important political functions mainly of a negative character. And this State has now excommunicated the Czarism. For the great northern Slav race there is to be no more Jewish money, no Jewish sympathy, parliamentary or journalistic, but in lieu of these unrelenting opposition. And Russia is slowly awaking to the meaning of this warfare. At first the announcement came as a joke, just as the campaign against Japan did. It is often hard to realize the force of little things. But already the wisest Russians are picking up ideas on the subject.

The first public meeting ever convened in the empire to discuss foreign politics was dedicated to the conflict which has broken out between the two nations. As it was held in the first week of the Lenten fast, when theatres, halls, concerts and even cinematographic shows are prohibited, the audience was large and "distinguished." The array of beauty, chivalry and age there was unprecedented. The police at the doors were disconcerted. Having been told that a "meeting" would take place, and knowing that meetings are always revolutionary, they expected a gathering of students, socialists and revolutionists, and made ready to keep the fellows down upon them at the psychological moment. But to the astonishment of the constables the audience was conveyed in stylish carriages and smart automobiles.

"Call that a meeting indeed!" scornfully exclaimed the preservers of order. On the whole, however, the speeches were interesting. To me they were also highly amusing. They helped show me the two Americas that exist for every Russian—just as there can be two Russias for every American—one when the nation is looked at through the telescope, and the other when the Russian is friendly and the fellow when his feelings are hostile. Some of the speakers being personal friends of mine, I listened to their utterances with especial attention, but as the leaders of THE SUN have long ago been informed of the gist of what they said and implied I need not now repeat it. There were the old arguments, the well known array of facts and the essence of patriotism to cement them. A distinguished American exclaimed to me on the following day:

"What a lot of time is wasted here in politics through silly efforts to change today into yesterday!"

Since then I have talked the whole subject over with Cabinet Ministers,

ex-Cabinet Ministers, members of the Duma, diplomats and plain men of business who have no political axe to grind. I asked them to give me their views on the economic and political aspects of the case, to tell me whether in their opinion Russia could take up the challenge thrown down by the United States and come out of the contest unscathed. And this is the tenor of their replies:

Russia has received an ultimatum

which she was not asked to take yesterday or five or ten years ago. Why then to-day? She is requested to allow American citizens of the Jewish faith to travel in Russia on the same terms as American Christians. Now that means that they are to enjoy privileges denied to Russian Jews, the bulk of whom are forbidden to circulate in the Czar's dominion.

This demand may or may not be well grounded, but urgency can certainly not be claimed for it. Neither was an ultimatum the most appropriate form in which to wrap it. But these are mere details. The crucial part of the matter is whether a great empire like Russia could brook effective interference with its internal legislation. For say what you may, the real meaning of the demand is to force the Czar's Government to modify its home legislation by repealing the anti-Jewish penal laws. That is what it comes to. And because of this pressure the heaviest will not be carried out. No change in the treatment of Jews will result from the agitation of outsiders—except perhaps a change for the worse. Several proposals have already been made to this effect, but the Czar's Ministers are too level headed to act upon them.

Russians say to the United States: "Our commercial treaty with you empowered us to subject your Jewish citizens to the same disabilities as those which hampered our own Jews. We availed ourselves of this right and you made no sign. That alone proves our case and ruins yours. And it is not all. Other nations might have complained of the same grievance—if it was a grievance—as you did. But aware that such a complaint would be unfounded, they remained quiescent. Your own practice, however, affords the best confirmation of our thesis. You disallow 15,000,000 of our citizens to enter your territory, all our Moslem subjects being kept out of the United States on the ground that they are polygamists. Others are excluded because they are 'colored.' Now how can you, who make such invidious distinctions, protest against our doing the same? Is there one set of weights and measures for you and another for us? Any principle or maxim which you can allege in support of this discrimination against negroes, Mongolians and Moslems will hold equally good of our practice toward Jews."

Russia then will not give way in the matter of mollifying her penal laws against Jews. The next point worth considering is what will come afterward. President Taft has denounced the treaty in order to prevent a worse thing happening, and Russians are turning over in their minds various ways and means of giving us a Roland for our Oliver. A tariff war has been included in the list of these, but as yet it cannot be said with truth to have come within the pale of practical politics. What is being seriously attempted is to make Russia commercially and industrially independent of the United States. And that is fair and legitimate. But can it be effected in time for the trial of forces which is about to take place? To this question there are many and conflicting replies. I personally am tempted to answer it in the negative. And the ground for my belief is the conviction that Russia, as usual, is wholly unprepared for the struggle. This can be made clear at a glance.

Russia is dependent on the United States for cotton and for agricultural implements and she cannot in a year grow the amount of raw produce which she now imports for her textile industries, nor manufacture mowing, winnowing and other machines and turn out implements equal to the best in the world. The following figures will convey an idea of what is meant by the dependence of the great Slav nation on the United States. Russia's imports from the United States amounted in the year 1908 to 79,200,000 rubles; 1909, 57,800,000 rubles, 1910, 74,400,000 rubles, while her exports to the States were only in 1908 82,800,000 rubles; 1909, 11,500,000 rubles; 1910, 9,500,000 rubles.

The staple imports were cotton and agricultural implements.

In the year 1910 Russia imported direct from America cotton valued at 106,000,000 rubles, from Egypt cotton valued at 28,000,000 rubles; and indirectly from America, that is, via England, Germany, Holland and France, 106,000,000 rubles worth. She also took 14,000,000 rubles worth of agricultural machinery.

It is admitted on all hands that under favorable conditions Turkestan could supply the cotton required. In fact it could furnish all Europe with cotton enough for all purposes. But then the conditions are not favorable. They are quite the reverse. For at least six years schemes of all kinds have been framed, discussed, amended and abandoned for the purpose of irrigating Turkestan and furthering cotton plantations there. But the one great barrier to progress is sluggishness.

Engineers, skilled planters and men with technical training and experience are essential to the success of the undertaking. And Russia cannot supply them, because her engineers, who are truly remarkable in many ways, are devoid of experience in that branch of activity.

Everybody is aware that Russian industry is a hothouse plant which cannot thrive in the cool breezy air of healthy competition. It lives on protective tariffs. Hence in spite of those tariffs America is able to hold her own against it in the matter of agricultural machinery. Thus in the year 1909 Russia purchased 11 million rubles worth of implements of husbandry from the United States, and in 1910 14.4 millions' worth. Russian industry is powerless to supply this want. And the utmost that the Government can do in case of a tariff war is to order them

the presidency of the Premier and Finance Minister, M. Kokovtzeff. A credit of 1,380,000 rubles was asked for by the Minister of Agriculture to enable the country to face the effects of the break with the United States. But on reflection they felt shy about burying money in irrigation works.

M. Kokovtzeff promised instead to give cheap credit and land to private enterprise and to favor in other ways every effort in the direction of preparing Russia to meet the contingencies which now threatened. He undertook to give a Government guarantee to private capital invested in irrigation and kindred enterprises. Moreover, the Government has drafted two bills for the purpose of regulating the water supply in Turkestan. Further, a number of prominent members of the Duma headed by the ex-Speaker,

Communications Sent by Jacob H. Schiff to Count Witte Now Made Public for the First Time

United States as the Russian peace envoy at Portsmouth a representative committee of Jews composed of Jacob H. Schiff, Mr. Seligman, Oscar Straus and Adolph Lewisohn discussed the situation of the Jews in Russia with him.

Mr. Schiff outlined his views on the condition of the Jews to the Russian statesman in several communications. The following telegram and letter ad-

of Berlin—who has since gone to St. Petersburg and other parts of Russia to study the situation and report upon the relief measures which should be adopted by the International committees just formed for the amelioration of the hard lot of the sufferers from mob violence—would receive every facility to enable him to properly discharge the mission which he has undertaken.

Both for myself and for those for whom I am authorized to speak I thank you most heartily for the assurances given me in your cablegrams. We here fully realize not only the enormity of the task which has been placed upon you but also its immense difficulties, and we earnestly pray, as I have already assured you in my recent cable message, that the strength may be vouchsafed you in body and in mind to shoulder this terrible responsibility so that you may be able to carry through successfully the task of the regeneration of Russia and its passing from the medieval conditions which have predominated until recently into a modern state, governed under a system which shall assure both happiness and prosperity to its people and at the same time the respect of other nations.

With all right thinking people throughout the civilized world we deeply mourn the sad fact that our unhappy coreligionists in Russia have had to suffer so terribly, and we cannot withhold the conviction that the unmerciful and inhuman treatment which has been inflicted upon Russian Jews has been instigated by the very authorities who, in adequately governed and civilized States, exist for the proper protection of life and property. No doubt appears to exist that your local authorities, seeing the coming of the end of the old régime and the despotic power which they have so long exercised for their own benefit and to the detriment of the people, have in their rage in many instances instigated the populace against the Jews in order to punish these for having, to a certain extent, aided in bringing about the new order of things which your august sovereign has deemed it timely and well to inaugurate, mainly, I believe, under your advice and with your supervision.

Providence has assigned to the Jew the mission to bring nearer the brotherhood of man, and it has always been his fate, even from Jesus down, to suffer as missionaries have to suffer and to be sacrificed, so that better times and better things may be made possible.

Jewry in general will have at least this consolation, that the present awful sufferings of their Russian coreligionists will not have been for naught nor their blood spilled in vain if a new, free, enlightened and happy Russia results from the present turmoil and the horrible conditions it is having in its wake.

It is a gratification to read in the messages which come from Russia to the public press that even now you are seeking to make good the assurances which you have given us in Portsmouth and which we have had the great privilege to make known to the world that, whenever the power should come into your hands to bring this about, civic equality will be given to the Jewish population of Russia. While the misgivings you expressed as to the consequences this might, in the first instance, have upon the fate of the Jews themselves have unfortunately become true with a vengeance, it becomes, for this very reason, but doubly proper and important that no step backward be taken and that the Jewish subjects of the Czar be vouchsafed every civic right, personal liberty and perfect equality before the law accorded to the rest of the people.

I am well convinced that no one can better realize than you that anything less would be alike unfortunate for Russia and for the Jews. Spain upward of four centuries ago was more humane, when it compelled its Jews to leave, than Russia, which in the beginning of the twentieth century has committed its Jewish population to degeneration in narrow pales of settlement, to be murdered by instigated and unmerciful mobs at every opportunity.

Never again can Russia regain the respect and confidence of the civilized world, without which no nation can prosper, if an end be not made, once and forever, of these terrible conditions, and if the new Government now being formed, and at the head of which you have fortunately been placed, should not succeed in assuring safety and equal opportunities throughout the empire to the Jewish population, then indeed the time will have arrived, for the Jews in Russia to make preparations to quit their inhospitable and unjust fatherland. When the problem with which the civilized world will then become confronted will be an enormous one, it will be solved, because solved it must be, and you, who are not only a far seeing statesman but also a great economic student, know also best that the fate of Russia and its doom will then be sealed.

Having become impressed with your high mindedness and earnestness of purpose when I had the privilege of meeting and becoming acquainted with you in Portsmouth, I deem it but right and proper that I should address you without reserve, and again expressing the fervent hope that success may accompany your high endeavors, and difficult task, I am, with assurances of much esteem, Yours most faithfully,

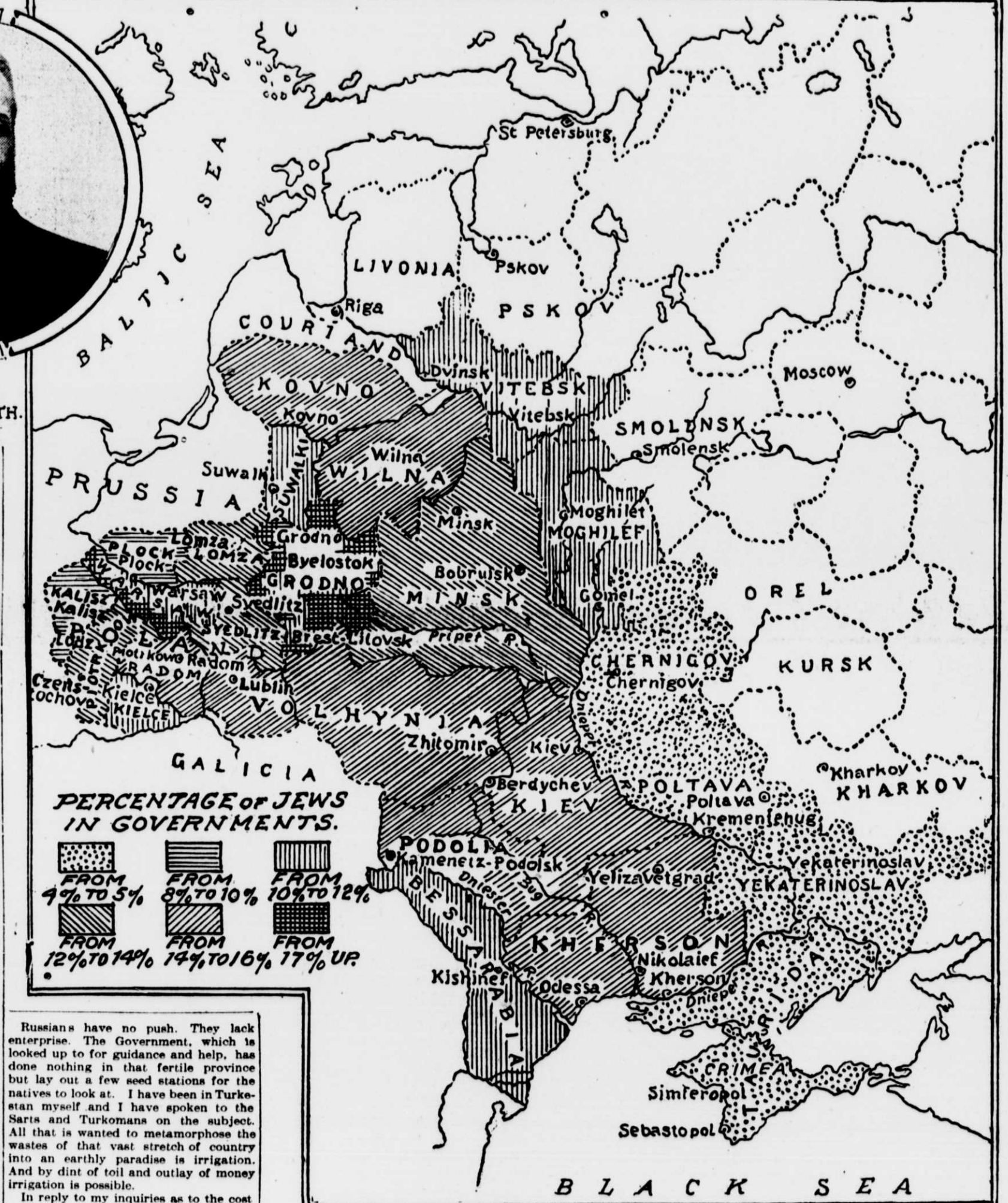
JACOB H. SCHIFF.
Tophis Excellency Count Witte, St. Petersburg.

Russian Reactionaries, Angered, Carry On Anti-American Campaign.

Herman Bernstein has long made a close study of Russian affairs. He is able to speak with accurate knowledge of the methods adopted by the Reactionaries to prevent an agreement with



COUNT WITTE, TO WHOM AMERICAN JEWS APPEALED AT PORTSMOUTH.



MAP OF WESTERN RUSSIA SHOWING THE JEWISH PALE OF SETTLEMENT.

Russians have no push. They lack enterprise. The Government, which is looked up to for guidance and help, has done nothing in that fertile province but lay out a few seed stations for the natives to look at. I have been in Turkestan myself and I have spoken to the Sars and Turkomans on the subject. All that is wanted to metamorphose the wastes of that vast stretch of country into an earthly paradise is irrigation. And by dint of toil and outlay of money irrigation is possible.

In reply to my inquiries as to the cost of this improvement competent authorities gave me the following figures: Russia produces 11½ million pounds of cotton annually—a pound is equal to forty pounds—and needs about 12½ millions more. Now in order to grow this quantity she would have to water about 300,000 desatines of land—a desatine is 2.702 acres—at a cost of about 140 million rubles or say \$70,000,000. But that sum is not available. Certainly the Government will not provide it, and private enterprise is equally reluctant.

And not without reason. For an enterprise of that nature in Russian hands would come to naught for lack of enterprise, caution and proper skill, whereas if it were a foreign concern extreme Russian nationalists would cry out against the "greedy foreigners" in the Duma and elsewhere and pay more for them than if she had purchased them direct. That's all. The whole subject was thrashed out a few days ago in a Cabinet council under

Gutckhoff, have founded a permanent parliamentary commission for the furtherance of cotton growing in Turkestan. But all those measures constitute "music of the future." At present Russia cannot and will not inaugurate a war of tariffs. She would only be cutting off her nose to spite her face. On the other hand, however, she will not modify her anti-Jewish legislation. On this point I have received emphatic assurances from members of the imperial Government.

Messages From Jacob H. Schiff to Count Witte Never Before Published.

When Count Sergius Witte was in the

dress by Mr. Schiff to Count Witte are now published for the first time.

SEPTEMBER 11, 1905.
His Excellency, Sergius de Witte, St. Regis Hotel, New York:

I greatly regret that absence prevents me from visiting you to-morrow with the other gentlemen with whom I had the pleasure of meeting you at Portsmouth. Taking this method of wishing you a pleasant homeward journey, will you permit me to give expression to my gratification that we were enabled to explain to you the views of American Jews as well as the American people concerning the Russo-Jewish question. I trust, now that you have seen with your own eyes that the Russian Jew becomes a good citizen under conditions which, as in our country, do him justice, you will not hesitate to repeat this object lesson to those to whom are committed the destinies of Russia. I pray also that the time may be hastened when you and others who feel like I do can meet with nothing between us, as I am certain it is your own wish, and may God speed you.

JACOB H. SCHIFF.
November 21, 1905.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: You have been good enough, notwithstanding the great pressure which must be now upon you in every direction, to recently send me two cablegrams, the first telling me of the horror the Russian Government feels at the late outbreaks in Odessa and elsewhere and at the impotence of the local authorities to give proper and adequate protection, and the second cablegram assuring me that Dr. Paul Nathan

COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA IN 1911

Value of imports into the United States from Russia.....	\$12,203,462
Value of exports from the United States to Russia.....	24,704,049

VALUE OF CHIEF IMPORTS FROM RUSSIA.		VALUE OF CHIEF EXPORTS TO RUSSIA.	
Hides and skins.....	\$5,409,391	Agricultural implements.....	\$8,136,415
Wool, unmanufactured.....	2,097,363	Cotton, unmanufactured.....	6,240,885
Furs and fur skins, undressed.....	859,588	Iron and steel, manufactured.....	3,532,277
Scrap india rubber, old.....	638,367	Twine.....	1,765,371
Licorice root.....	738,138	Copper, pigs, bars, &c.....	1,512,374
Fibers and textile grasses.....	408,446	Leather and its manufactures.....	813,031
Hair, unmanufactured.....	214,629	Rosin.....	615,459
Wood pulp.....	170,332	Meat and dairy products.....	374,735
Wool manufactures.....	141,405	Lubricating oil.....	174,065
Iron and steel manufactures.....	63,011	Cars and carriages.....	156,461

Continued on Second Page.